

An Interview with

ROBERT TAYLOR

OH 154

Conducted by William Aspray

on

28 February 1989

Palo Alto, CA

Charles Babbage Institute
The Center for the History of Information Processing
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis

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QUESTION

Can you do it one more time?

ROBERT TAYLOR

I'll do it again. Yeah, sorry about that, Katie.

(OFF MIKE)

QUESTION

Yeah, that was just great.

ROBERT TAYLOR

All right.

QUESTION

Because it's a joke.

ROBERT TAYLOR

Sometimes I'm asked ... oops.

(OFF MIKE)

ROBERT TAYLOR

Oh boy. It's just that halyard(?) is what I miss,
you understand. Sometimes I'm asked uh ...

what my impression is of the next twenty-five
years of Internet. And in nineteen sixty-seven,
JCR Licklighter and I wrote a paper together,

FJ-OK

describing what ... we thought the Arpanet might become. And, I'd like to read you the closing of that paper. "For the society, the impact will be good or bad, depending mainly on the question, will to be on line be a privilege or a right? If only a favored segment of the population gets a chance to enjoy the advantage of intelligence amplification, the network may exaggerate the discontinuity in the spectrum of intellectual opportunity. On the other hand, if the network should prove to do what a few have envisioned, and hope, surely the boon to humankind would be beyond measure.

Unemployment would disappear from the face of the earth forever, for consider the magnitude of the task of adapting the network software to all the new generations of computers, coming closer and closer upon the heels of their predecessors, until the entire population of the world is caught up in an infinite crescendo of on line, interactive,

debugging."

QUESTION

Perfect. That's it. That's it. Is that it?

(OFF MIKE)

ROBERT TAYLOR

That is a wrap, as we say?

QUESTION

We're done.

(OFF MIKE)

(END OF TAPE ONE)